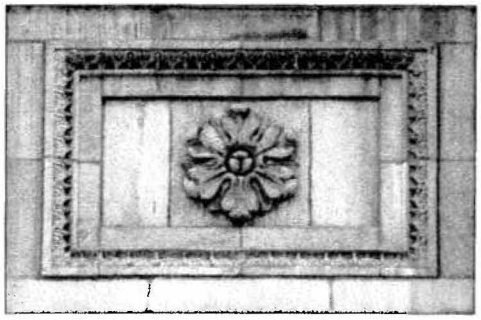
LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT



Continental and Commercial National Bank Building

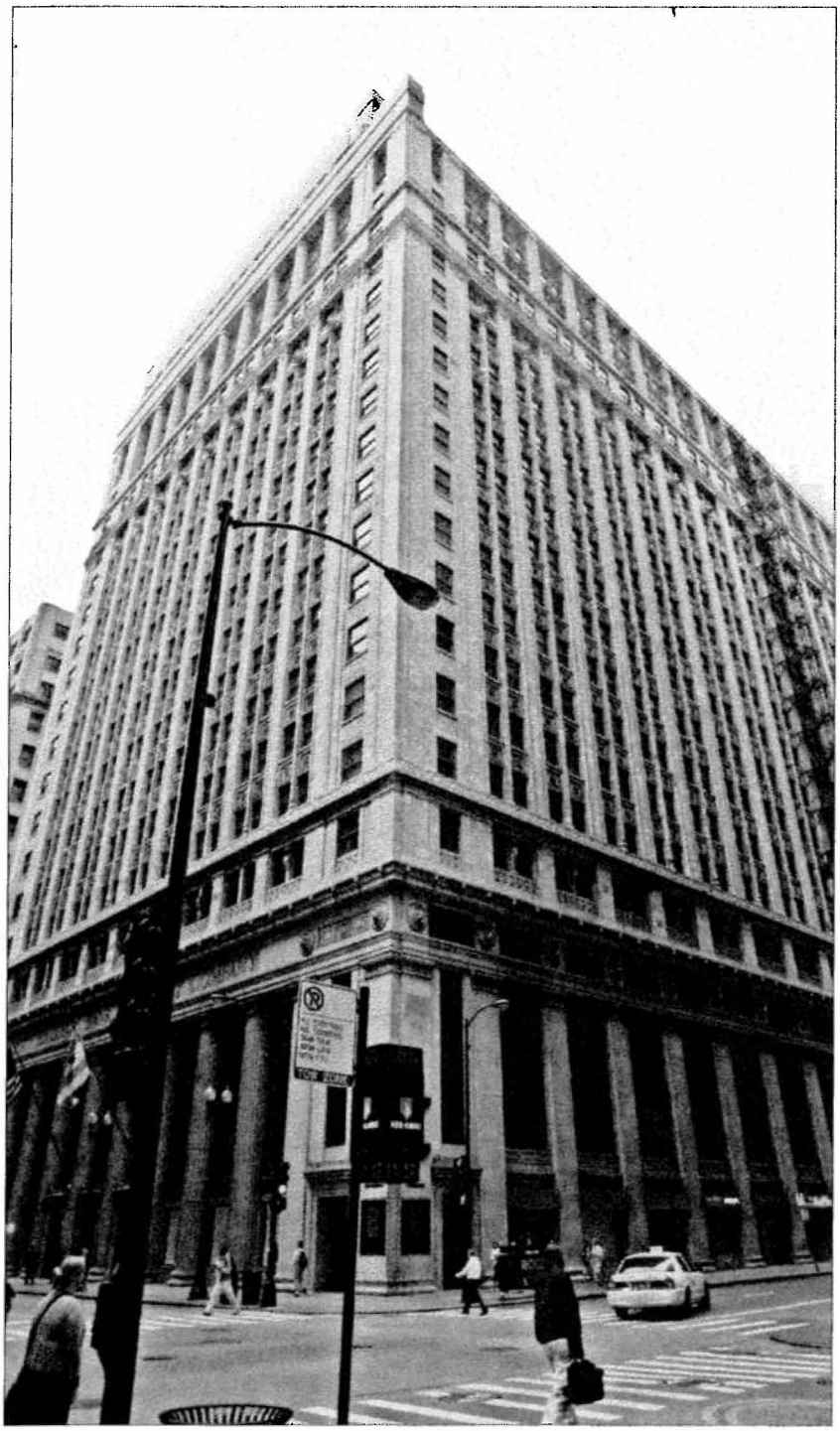
208 South LaSalle Street

Submitted to the Commission on Chicago Landmarks in July 2007

CITY OF CHICAGO

Richard M. Daley, Mayor

Department of Planning and Development



(left) Image 5: Current photo of the Classical Revival-style Continental and Commercial National Bank Building. (cover) Image 1-4: The Continental and Commercial National Bank circa 1920s and the building's terra cotta details of a rosette, fret panel and egg-and-dart banding.

The Commission on Chicago Landmarks, whose nine members are appointed by the Mayor and City Council, was established in 1968 by city ordinance. It is responsible for recommending to the City Council that individual buildings, sites, objects, or entire districts be designated as Chicago Landmarks, which protects them by law. The commission is staffed by the Chicago Department of Planning and Development, 33 N. LaSalle St., Room 1600, Chicago, IL 60602; (312-744-3200) phone; (312-744-2958) TTY; (312-744-9140) fax; web site, http:www.cityofchicago.org/landmarks.

This Preliminary Summary of Information is subject to possible revision and amendment during the designation proceedings. Only language contained within the City Council's final landmark designation ordinance should be regarded as final.

Continental and Commercial National Bank Building

208 S. LaSalle Street

BUILT: **1914**

ARCHITECTS: **D. H. Burnham & Co.;**
Graham, Anderson, Probst & White

The Continental and Commercial National Bank Building is a significant early 20th century commercial building located in Chicago's historic LaSalle Street financial district. Forming one portion of the visually distinctive LaSalle "canyon," the gray terra cotta-clad, Classical Revival-style building occupies a full city block, bounded by LaSalle, Wells, Adams and Quincy Streets.

The building is noteworthy as one of the last two buildings upon which famed Chicago architect D. H. Burnham personally supervised the design; the building was constructed after Burnham's death by his successor firm, Graham, Anderson, Probst, & White. Its visually impressive "temple front" of giant-order columns that marks the building's primary entrance on LaSalle is the oldest such use of large-scale Classical forms surviving among former bank buildings on LaSalle Street, and set a visual tone for the street.

Daniel H. Burnham was perhaps Chicago's most nationally prominent architect during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. With his early partner, John Wellborn Root, he was a pioneer in the development of Chicago steel-frame commercial architecture. Through his supervisory position overseeing the design of the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition, which popularized large-scale Classical public buildings in America, his later 1906-09 Plan of Chicago, which reconceived Chicago as a grand "Paris on the Lake," and a variety of both public and private building commissions, Burnham left an indelible legacy in the development of the Classical Revival architectural style in America in general and Classically-influenced buildings in Chicago specifically.

The Continental and Commercial National Bank Building exemplifies the brilliance of Burnham's career. In its day, the building occupied the largest site ever assembled for an office building in Chicago, and it was the first private building in the City to occupy an entire block. It held nearly one million square feet of office space for three associated banks, plus other tenants. According to the *New York Times*, it was one of the largest modern office structures in the world at the time of its completion in 1914. More importantly, it represents the successful application of monumental Classical Revival-style architecture to large-scale privately-held buildings that Burnham had envisioned in his Plan of Chicago.

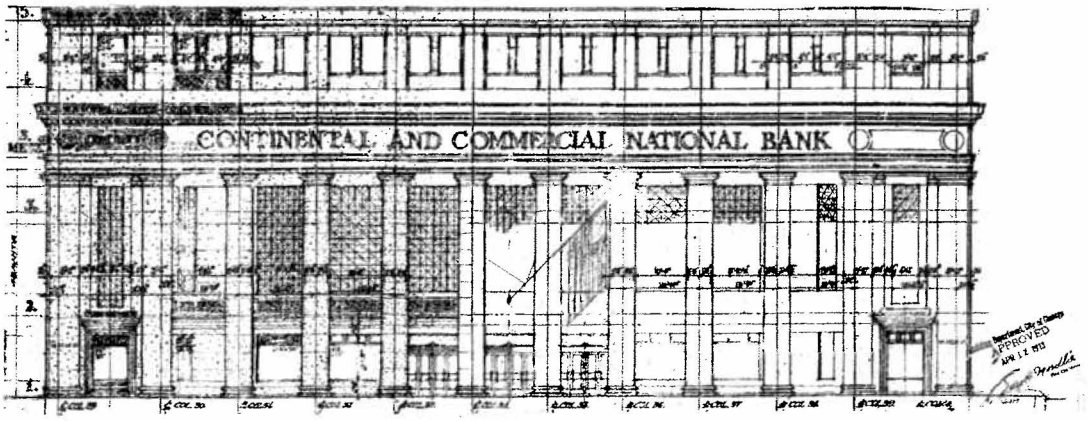


Image 7: Burnham's 1913 drawing of the Continental and Commercial National Bank Building La Salle Street façade

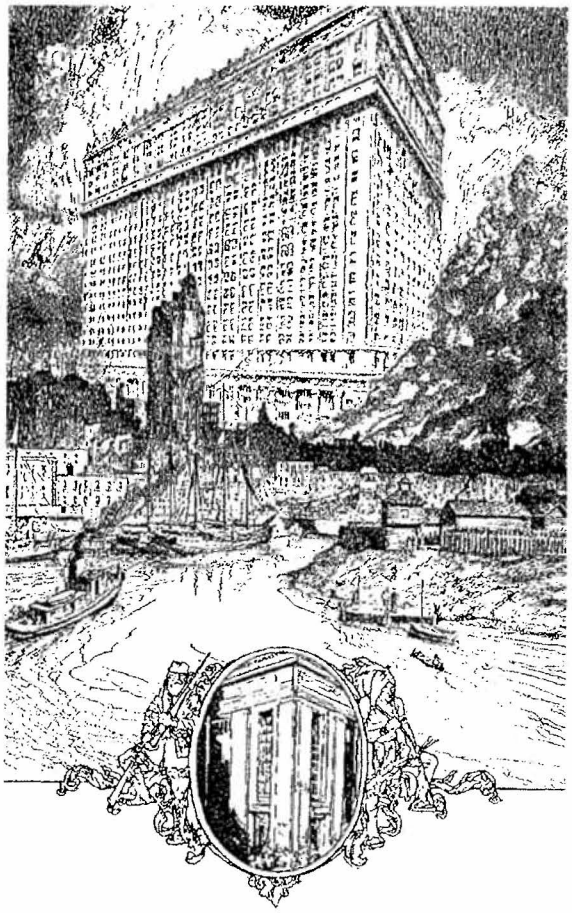


Image 8: Cover image of the circa 1923 book, *The Making of a Modern Bank* written by Arthur D. Welton about The Continental and Commercial National Bank which features the banks new office building.

BUILDING HISTORY

Because of its large site, announced size, and intent as a "monument" to commerce, early local press coverage of the design and construction of the Continental and Commercial National Bank Building was considerable. From day one, it was recognized to be "an important landmark in the city". The height combined with the bulk and scale was to be impressive and challenging for Burnham as the designer. It was a gigantic enterprise whose conception, planning, and execution called for great architectural, engineering and artistic skill.

The client for the Continental and Commercial National Bank Building was bank president George McClelland Reynolds. Reynolds was Chicago's leading banker since 1906. During his tenure, the bank grew to be one of the country's largest banks and was in the forefront of modern banking practices. It had been founded in 1865 as the Commercial National Bank of Chicago. By the late 1890s it was developing a solid organization and generated business by aiding small struggling country banks in the Midwest.

Beginning in 1909, Reynolds envisioned a large central bank that could provide varied services to an array of patrons, from individuals to businesses to associated banks. In September of that year, Commercial merged with Bankers National Bank. Soon Commercial merged first with American Trust and Savings Bank and then Hibernian Bank. By the time of building's construction, through a

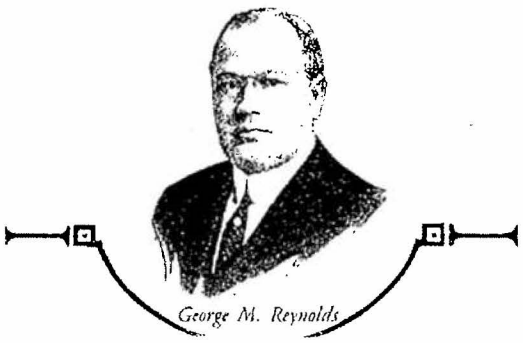


Image 9: George Reynolds, President of the Continental and Commercial National Bank who commissioned the new bank building at 208 S. La Salle

variety of ownership structures, the umbrella of the Continental and Commercial National Bank covered the Continental National Bank, the Commercial Trust and Savings Bank, the American Trust and Savings Bank, the Hibernian Bank and the Safe Deposit Company.

Not only physically but symbolically, Reynolds' new bank would be headquartered at 208 S. LaSalle Street. According to a 1923 history published by the bank:

> The many combinations, buildings, movings, and changes came to rest in this great building where the product of the bank melting pot was completely housed under one roof. The Continental and Commercial group of banks [was] the product of forty years of growth and development . . . [intending] to give Chicago and the West the banking services they required.

At the time, this concept of multiple banks under one roof was unheard of. In this regard, the Continental and Commercial National Bank was a decade ahead of its competitors.

Although Daniel Burnham was on the Board of Directors of the Bank, Reynolds still decided to hold a competition for the building design. Burnham initially did not intend to enter. Given the prestige of the commission, however, he did not resist for long. Working closely with Ernest Graham on the design, the preparation of plans and presentation drawings took one month. Work was done at Graham's home and Burnham made daily visits. Burnham however faced considerable competition. Most of the larger Chicago firms entered, including Holabird and Roche; Jarvis Hunt; Jenney, Mundie, and Jensen; Schmidt, Garden and Martin; Shepley, Rutan and Coolidge; and Marshall and Fox. On June 5, 1911, the bank board selected Burnham and Company.

Design development proceeded rapidly. Burnham was facing a deadline. As of September 1, 1911, the City of Chicago would impose a height restriction for new buildings of two hundred feet. Burnham's design for the Continental and Commercial

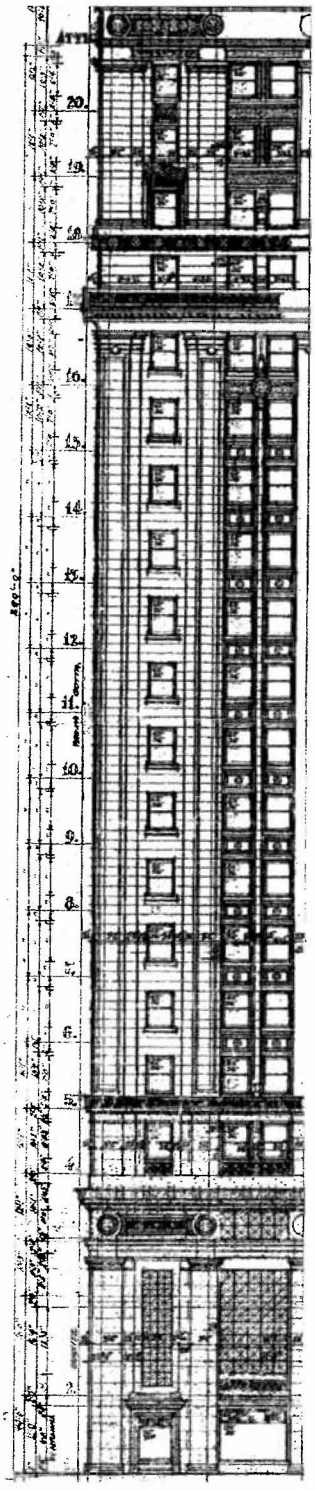


Image 10: 1913 Drawing of the south corner section of the Adams Street façade of the Continental & Commercial National Bank Building

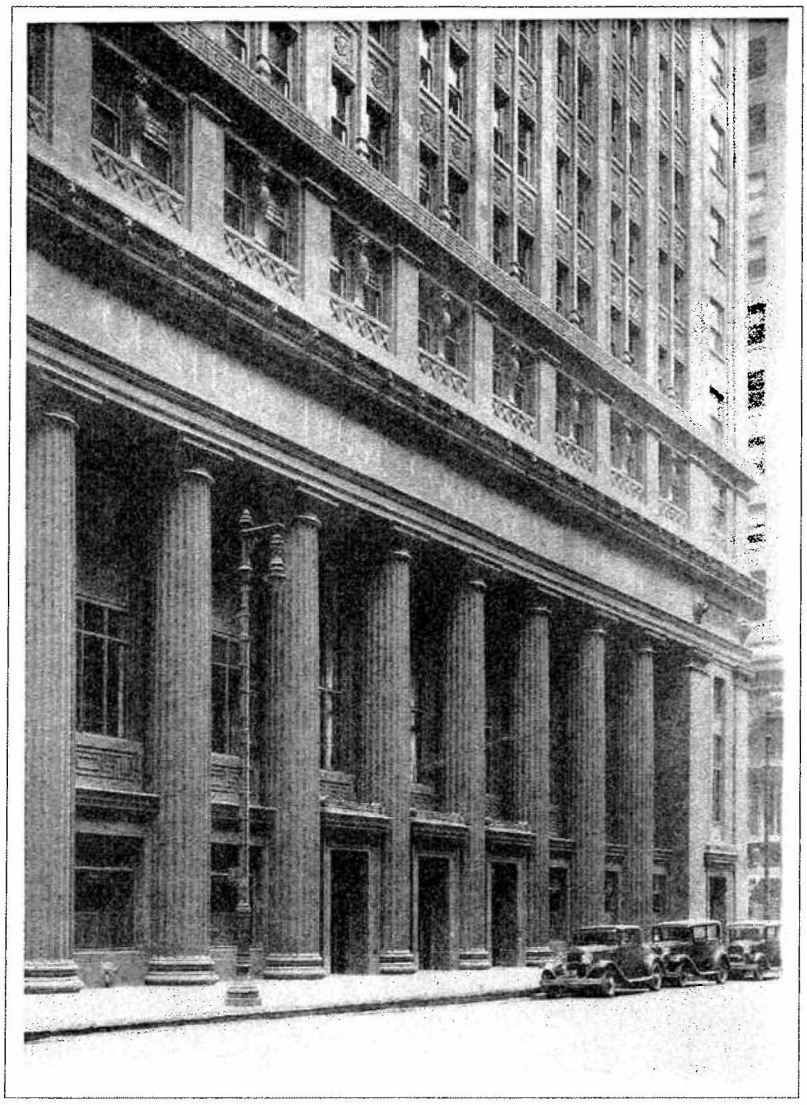
National Bank building was much taller at two hundred sixty feet. As Burnham wrote at the time:

> The Continental and Commercial National Bank is about to build; the permit must be taken out on or before September 1st, because at that date the ordinance confining buildings in this city to two hundred feet in height instead of two hundred and sixty feet comes into force. No one else can work out and determine the final plan and elevation and I must stick to it day and night until this is accomplished.

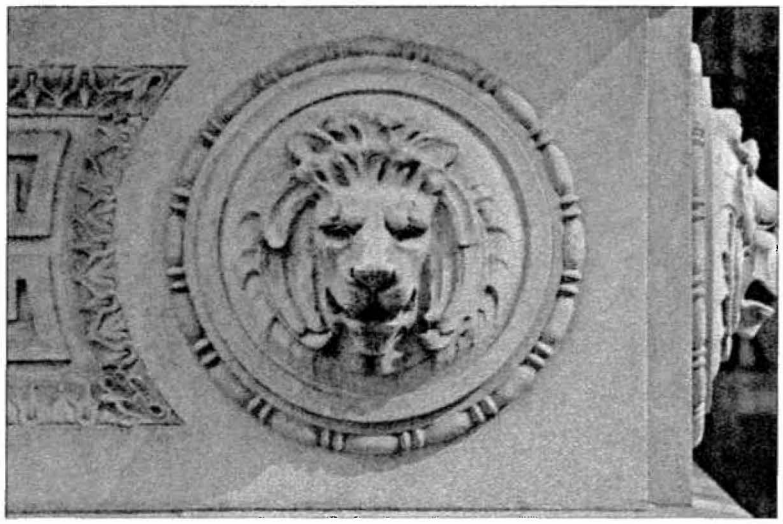
Reynolds and Burnham filed for the permit just two weeks before the height limit was implemented.

Although Burnham died in the spring of 1912, the building was completed by Burnham's successor company, Graham, Anderson, Probst, and White, and the work was faithful to Burnham's original design. On April 10, 1914, the Continental and Commercial National Bank Building opened its doors.

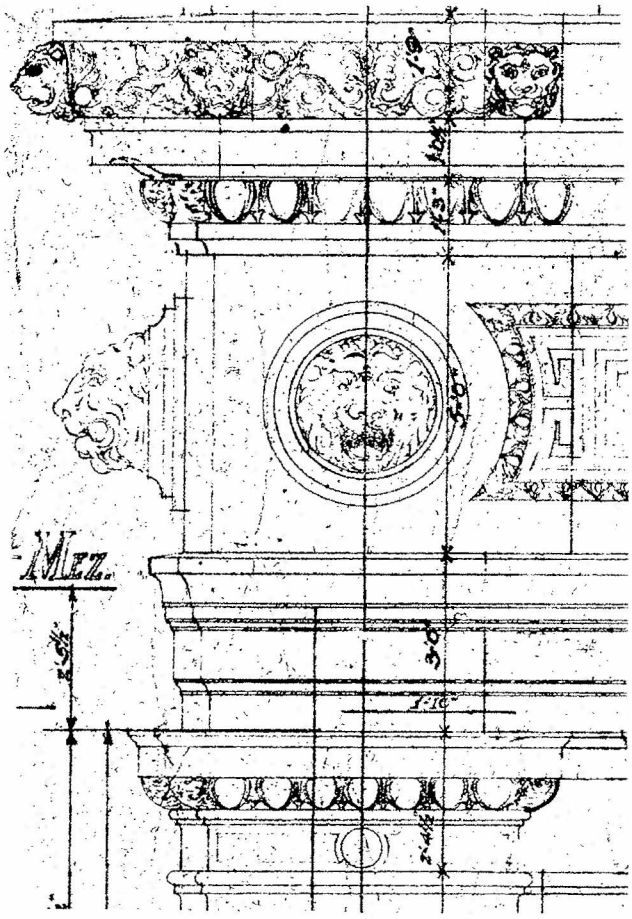
The finished building was a dramatic execution of monumentality. The four facades were similar in massing, materials, style and execution but clearly the east LaSalle Street elevation was primary. As designed, it featured a traditional tripartite arrangement with a base, shaft and capital. The dominant feature at the base was a row of massive fluted Doric columns that spanned nearly the width of the façade and rose three stories to support a classically detailed table. At the ground level, recessed behind these columns then was the bank's primary entrance, three pairs of bronze double doors centered between pairs of columns. Flanking the doors were bronze framed windows on a granite bulkhead, also centered between the columns. The last section of the façade on the north and south was flush with the street and featured a storefront window with a pronounced classical surround that gave the appearance of a doorway.



(left) Image 11: Continental & Commercial National Bank, S. LaSalle Street façade, circa 1920s (bottom) Image 12: Current S. LaSalle Street entrance doors



Images 13 & 14: Continental & Commercial National Bank classical ornamentation (top) Lions head corner at mezzanine (bottom) 1913 drawing of lions head corner at mezzanine



The "shaft" portion of the façade runs from the fourth floor to the seventeenth. Framed horizontally at the fourth and fifth floors and again at the seventeenth and eighteen floors by string courses, the portion of the façade has a strong vertical orientation with simple pilasters following the column lines to define bays created by paired one-over-one windows with spandrels featuring a rosette. Continuous vertical mullions between the paired windows further emphasize the verticality.

The capital portion of the façade then is floors eighteen through twenty. This attic features a terra cotta colonnade of fluted Doric columns and is similarly styled to the base colonnade at a smaller scale.

Although supported by an internal steel frame, the building was sheathed in terra cotta reminiscent of limestone blocks to convey a sense of stability and weight. The terra cotta also allowed it to be intricately trimmed both at the base and cornice.

By virtue of setting, materials, massing and design, the overall impression is

temple like of a monumental scale. The west façade, along Wells Street, is similar to the east but was less detailed. The north, Adams Street, and south, Quincy Street, facades although physically larger (e.g., longer), the design is again simpler.

Access to the interior was through the primary entry was off LaSalle Street or the simpler second entry off Fifth Avenue (now Wells Street). These two entries were then connected by a marble corridor. At each corner were retail shops and banks of six elevators. Continuing down the corridor, on the south was the Continental and Commercial Trust and Savings lobby and on the north the Hibernian Bank lobby.

At the center of the corridor, just beyond the elevator lobby, was a grand marble stair to the second floor. Again, the stair at the east was more dramatic than the west, but both led to the second floor banking hall. This hall as originally constructed was a stunning open space that spanned the length and width of the floor and rose to a skylight above the fourth floor nearly seventy feet above.

The third and mezzanine floors only contained a small work space at each corner. The fourth, fifth, and sixth floors were devoted to bank work spaces and offices, some of which might be leased as appropriate. Beginning with the seventh, the floors were speculative lease offices, organized with interconnecting doors off free-standing double-loaded corridors which could be configured as tenants required. The finished building was to set a standard for future office buildings attention to access, light, and ventilation. Corridors were dressed with white marble walls topped with a continuous transom framed in wood. The light-well, dressed with white enameled brick, offered both natural light and ventilation to offices on the interior of the corridor.

It was Burnham's desire that the office building as a building type be a monument to commerce and rose to the stature equal of public institutions as government offices and libraries. Burnham characterized commercial buildings as definers rather than occupiers of the public space of the city. Through the use of the classical architectural language, Burnham would accomplish this goal; it was particularly the use of classicism lent to the importance of the occupants and structure.

In July 1915, *The Architectural Record* carried a lengthy article on Burnham, providing a comprehensive view of the firm's work. It ended on the Continental and Commercial National Bank:

> The Continental and Commercial National Bank and office building at Chicago may be regarded as the culmination of the important work done in the last fifteen years of the firm as D. H. Burnham And Company.

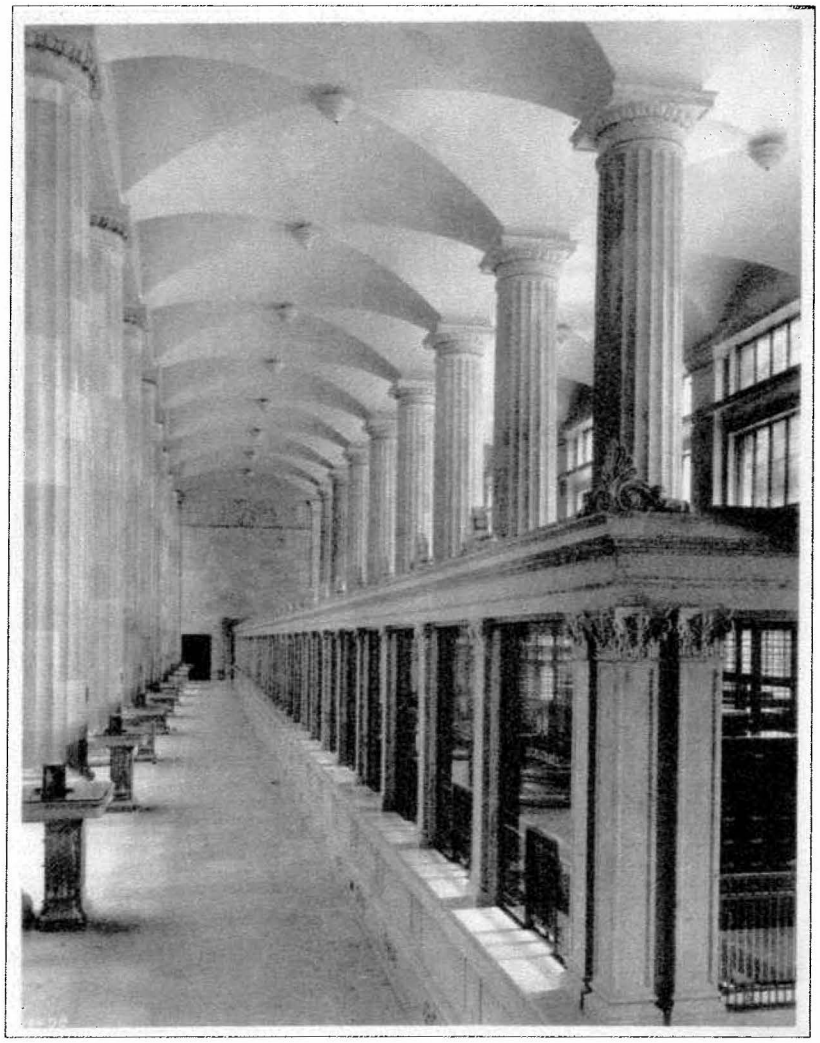


Image 15: (top) 1950s office at the Continental and Commercial National Bank Building. Image 16: (left) Continental & Commercial Bank tellers stations in the banking hall circa 1912

Image 17: Architect Daniel Burnham on the terrace of his Evanston, Illinois home. He was the designer of the Continental and Commercial National Bank Building and was know for his Beaux Art inspired designs.

ARCHITECT D. H. BURNHAM

Daniel Hudson Burnham was born in the small town of Henderson in upstate New York on September 4, 1846. He was a descendant from an old New England family and was the sixth of seven children to Harriet and Edwin Burnham. Burnham was raised under the teachings of the Swedenborgian Church of New Jerusalem, a Christian philosophy that encouraged among other values a strong belief that man should strive to be of service to others.

At the age of eight, his parents moved to Chicago, just as the city was blossoming into a major metropolis providing the nation's preeminent water and rail gateway between the established Eastern cities and the still rough-and-tumble, but rapidly growing, West. In 1848, the Illinois and Michigan Canal was had been completed, linking the Great Lakes (and through the Erie Canal, the port of New York and Europe itself) and the Mississippi River. Four years later a pair of rail lines linked the city with the East Coast.

The young Burnham was first educated in city schools, and then was later sent to Massachusetts to complete his studies under a private tutor. Burnham sought admission to Harvard and Yale, but failed the entrance examinations. At the age of twenty-two, he returned to Chicago and began working in a large mercantile house.

Burnham quickly became dissatisfied with mercantile life. His unhappiness was so apparent that his father sought advice from a thirty-six year old architect, William LeBaron Jenney. Jenney, who was destined to become one of Chicago's foremost

architects and who achieved much fame as the "father of the skyscraper" for his pioneering steel-frame-constructed commercial buildings, had just moved to Chicago and had organized the firm of Jenney, Schermerhorn & Bogart.

The meeting with Jenney set Burnham on a course in architecture. For the next five years, Burnham worked at learning the craft. First, he apprenticed with Jenney for a year. He then left to work under John Van Osdel, who was popularly considered Chicago's first professional architect and noted for his palatial homes and hotels, including the now-demolished third Palmer House, completed in 1870. Burnham next worked for Gustave Laudeau, an architect about whom little is known.

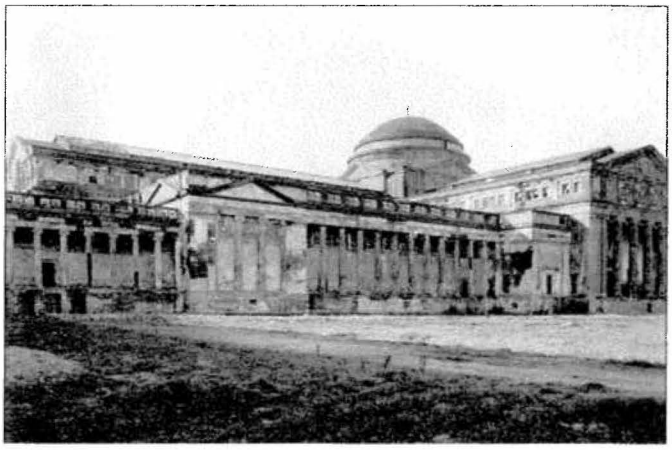
Finally, in 1872, the year after the Great Chicago Fire, he joined the firm of Carter, Drake & Wight. Peter Wight, the firm's chief designer, was only eight years Burnham's senior. As a draftsman under Wight, Burnham broadened the scope of his training and acquired a deeper appreciation of scholarship in architecture. During that period, he also became friendly with fellow employee John Wellborn Root.

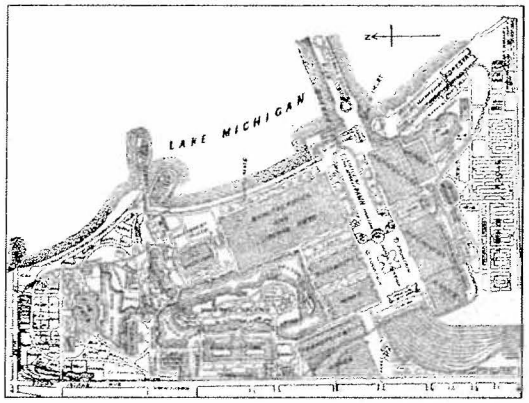
In 1873, Burnham and Root left and established what was to become one of the premier architectural firms in the United States. Unlike in character and temperament, their association nevertheless proved to be a happy one over the course of years until brought to a close in 1891 by Mr. Root's death.

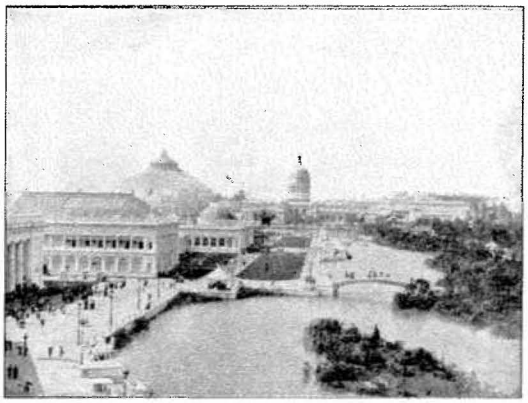
In the early years, the firm's work was largely residential. The first major commission came in 1874, when Burnham and Root designed a $60,000 Prairie Avenue mansion for Chicago stockyards boss John B. Sherman. Over the next few decades, the ever more successful firm designed dozens of large homes and commercial buildings, mostly in Chicago. Their ten-story Montauk Building, completed in 1882, was the first of their contributions to the new field of skyscraper design. Other notable works included the Rookery; the original Art Institute building; the Monadnock Building (the last and tallest high rise masonry building); the offices of the *Chicago Daily News*, then the city's leading newspaper; and the Masonic Temple, which was thought to be the tallest building in the world at the time of its completion in 1892.

Image 18: (top) Burnham & Roots Monadnock Building touted as the tallest building in the world at the time of completion in 1891. Image 19: (bottom) Burnham & Root's Romanesque Revival style Rookery Building.

(Image 20-23) The World's Columbian Exposition, held in Chicago in 1893, established Burnham's reputation for city planning and classically-inspired design. (top) The chief surviving structure from the fair, the Palace of Fine Arts reflects the overall Classical Revival-style appearance of the fair. The building was reconstructed as the Museum of Science and Industry between 1929 and 1940. (middle left) Burnham's plan of the 1893 fair. (middle right) Bird's eye view of the fair. (bottom) A photo of the World's Columbian Exposition design team, with Burnham (wearing a top hat) on the far left.







In these early years, it became clear that Burnham's forte was organization and administration. He was the businessman of the firm, of which Root was the designer. When Burnham became the chief of construction for the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago, Root was appointed chief consulting architect. Root's sudden death in 1891, however, added design to Burnham's responsibilities in the World's Fair. Here, Burnham turned for help to prominent Eastern architects and firms such as Richard Morris Hunt and McKim, Mead, and White, all of whom worked predominantly in academic styles such as the Classical Revival-style. Together, these firms and Burnham created the grandly scaled, Classically-inspired exposition grounds that became known as the "White City."

Following the Columbian Exposition, Burnham's practice continued to grow and included a number of major works, many outside Chicago. These include the Galt House Hotel in Louisville, Wyandotte Office Building in Columbus, Ohio, Majestic Office Building in Detroit and the Cuyahoga Office Building in Cleveland. Reflecting increasing reliance on his assistants, in 1896, he organized the firm of D. H. Burnham and Company, naming partners Ernest Graham, E. C. Shanklin, and Charles Atwood. During this era, the firm continued to design many notable Chicago buildings, including the Reliance Building; the offices of the city's two leading banks (First National and Commercial & Continental); a department store for Marshall Field & Co.; and the Field Museum, completed in 1920. Outside Chicago, major works of the Burnham firm included the Flatiron Building in New York City and Union Station in Washington D.C. At the time of Burnham's death in 1912, the firm had nearly two hundred employees, making it one of the largest architectural businesses in the United States.

As notable as Burnham was for architecture, he gained an even greater reputation for his influence as a city planner. As already noted, he supervised the design and construction of the Columbian Exposition. In 1901, Burnham headed efforts to plan the extension of Pierre L'Enfant's original plan for the District of Columbia. This was followed by additional requests for city plans from cities as San Francisco and Cleveland, and even internationally in the Philippine cities of Manila and Baguio. Perhaps his best work in city planning was the Plan of Chicago, prepared with Edward Bennett. The Plan is considered the nation's first example of a comprehensive planning document.

Reflecting his stature in his profession, in 1910, President William Howard Taft appointed Burnham the first chair of the National Commission of Fine Arts, charged with planning in the District of Columbia. The first project for the Commission was location and design of the Lincoln Memorial.

Early in 1912, in his sixty-ninth year, Mr. Burnham's health began to fail. In April, he left with his wife for a vacation and rest in Europe, but he died while at Heidelberg, Germany. In accordance with his wishes, his remains were cremated and later interred at the Burnham home in Evanston, Illinois.

THE CLASSICAL REVIVAL STYLE

After the fair, Burnham embraced the vision of the Classical Revival style. He became a close friend of Charles McKim and traveled abroad for the first time in 1896 to view firsthand the classical architecture of Greece and Rome. These ideas fed Burnham's vision for a planned and orderly city with both public and private buildings of high architectural quality. Burnham believed that a great city could not be created if architectural quality was restricted only to public buildings.

These notions paralleled with the role of business in the progress of America. While the country was split in its opinion of private business between civic father and robber baron, business leaders themselves in the era of "laissez-faire" capitalism embraced the notion that the progress of civilization and corporation were two sides of the same coin. Monumental architecture was not simply the purview of government; the phrase "temple of commerce" evoked a world view, not just a stylistic appellation.

In particular, the Classical Revival style lent itself to bank buildings. The values that these institutions wished to express to both the general public and clients in particular were extraordinary strength and solidity as a place of deposit. This was particularly important in the era of 1870 to 1920, an era when the number of banks grew ten-fold to create fierce competition at a time marked by financial instability.

The Classical Revival style exuded strength and stability. A building constructed in the style was usually the most imposing and impressive structure on the block. They were temple-like not only on the exterior but on the interior as well with large spaces, tall ceilings, highly decorated and appropriately finished.

The relationship of bank and style dated back to the First Bank of the United States, designed by Samuel Blodgett, Jr. in 1795 and carried forward in the Second Bank of the United States, designed by William Strickland in 1818. In Strickland's case, he used the Parthenon as a model and solidified the notion of "temple of finance". By the early 20th century, the bank as temple model morphed into the skyscraper bank using the "base, shaft and capital" exterior form in part to provide for notable classical ground floor spaces with speculative offices above.

Burnham came to develop a model office building in the Classical Revival style and was employed it for buildings in cities as far-flung as New York and San Francisco. From this time on, Burnham worked in the Classical mode. The strength and solidity of his office buildings was expressed in the use of granite, marble, and terra-cotta exteriors ornamented with Classical details. A clear sense of order and unity was the goal with the emphasis on balance, symmetry, and restraint.

When Burnham died, he left his successors an active and successful architectural practice, a trained staff capable of designing any contemporary building type, hundreds of satisfied clients, a well-accepted style, an international reputation, and a broadly

shared vision of architecture and the city. As successors to Burnham and Company, the firm of Graham, Anderson, Probst, and White was at the center of the movement that produced big offices through the building boom of the 1920s. During this time, their firm continued the work the Classical Revival style.

Considered by many the legacy of "The White City," the Classical Revival style is found throughout Chicago. Certainly many public buildings were built in this style: These include buildings loosely associated with the World's Columbian Exposition such as the Chicago Public Library (1897; Shepley, Rutan & Coolidge) and the Art Institute of Chicago (1892; Shepley, Rutan & Coolidge). It also includes government buildings as the City Hall-County Building (1906; Holabird & Roche). It also includes train stations such as the Chicago & North Western Railway Station (1911, Frost & Granger, demolished) and Union Station (1913-25; Burnham & Company; Graham, Anderson, Probst, & White).

The Classical Revival style was also embraced for commercial buildings such as theaters, including the State and Lake at 174-196 N. State St. and the Chicago just

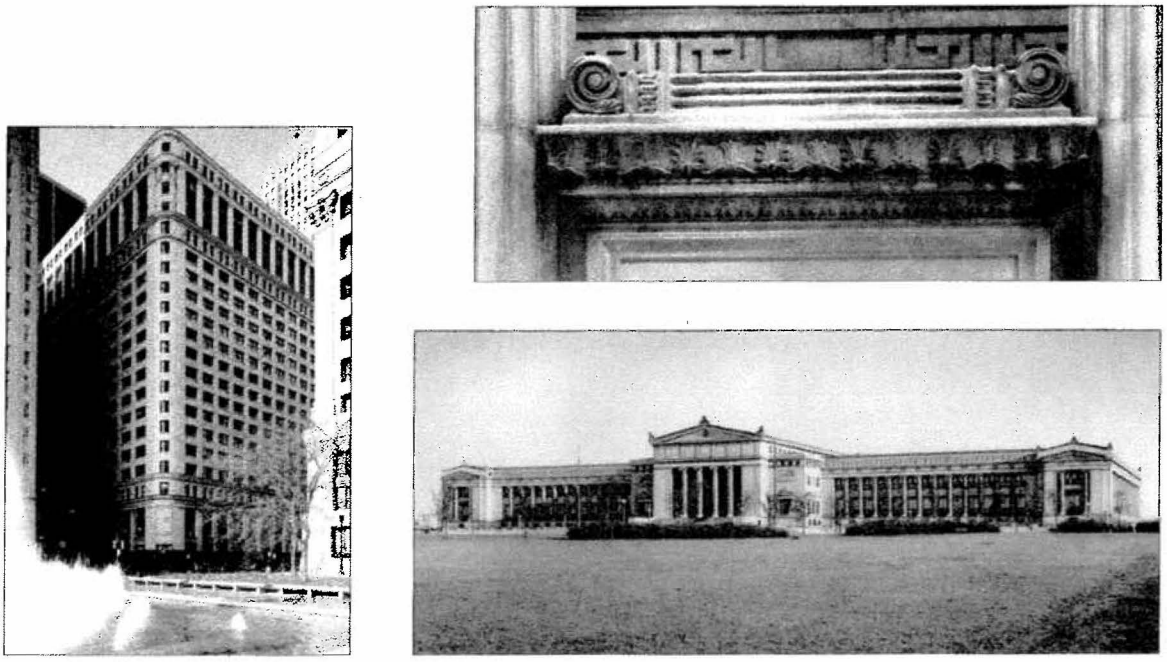


Image 24: (top) Continental & Commercial National Bank Building, LaSalle Street façade terra cotta detail above doors, and Image 25: (bottom left) Conway Building a Classical Revival-style building in Chicago designed by Burnham late in his career in 1912. Image 26: (bottom) The Field Museum, located on Chicago's lakefront, was conceived by Burnham as a grand, Classical Revival-style, temple-fronted building.

With Burnham's death, the remaining partners reorganized the firm, to be known as Graham, Anderson, Probst, & White. This partnership was comprised of Ernest Graham, Pierce Anderson, Edward Probst, and Howard Wright, all of whom had long worked for Burnham and embraced his vision and sense of aesthetic. It was this successor firm that carried the responsibility of executing Burnham's design for the Continental and Commercial National Bank.

Capitalizing on Burnham's legacy, Graham, Anderson, Probst, and White designed many of Chicago's iconic buildings during the 1910s and 20s, including the Wrigley Building, Merchandise Mart, Field Museum, Shedd Aquarium, Civic Opera House, and the old main U. S. Post Office. They also created Cleveland's preeminent 1920s-era skyscraper, the Terminal Tower.

Image 27 & 28: Graham, Anderson, Probst, and White, Burnham's successor firm and the firm that oversaw the completion of the Continental and Commercial National Bank Building, designed significant Classical Revival-style buildings in its own right, including (left) Chicago's Wrigley Building, and (right) Cleveland's Terminal Tower.

CLASSICAL REVIVAL ARCHITECTURE IN DOWNTOWN CHICAGO

Apart from being an important building associated with Burnham, the Continental and Commercial Bank is a significant early 20th century example of Classical Revival-style architecture in Chicago's Loop.

The renewed interest in classicism at the end of the nineteenth century emanated partially from the many young American architects who studied at the Ecole des Beaux Arts and brought back ideas about classicism and the sense of order it brought to architecture. One of the chief proponents of the style was the New York City firm of McKim, Mead, and White. Charles McKim's design for the Boston Public Library in 1887 was particularly influential in the style being applied to public buildings.

Characteristic of the style are three building sections comprised of base, shaft, and capitol, with the base being comprised of monumental columns and pilasters. Columns, pediments, surrounds, and cornices are decorated with classical motifs such as fretwork, scrolls, rosettes, and egg and dart coursing. The advent of glazed terra cotta blended particularly well with granite and marble. Used on the upper floors, it reduced weight and expense, while maintaining the appearance and detailing of the classical style. Although there can be extensive embellishment the overall effect is one of restrained elegance.

While the style gained popularity on the East Coast, it was Burnham who played the instrumental role first in drawing the style west and then promoting it nationally. He accomplished this by inviting East Coast architectural firms such as McKim, Mead, and White and Richard Morris Hunt to design for the Columbian Exposition. The dramatic "White City" produced a sudden and pronounced shift away from dark, heavy Romanesque-style buildings such as the 1888 Rookery Building. The Columbian Exposition provided people with a view of a perfectly planned city with ideal buildings. What they took away was a desire to create their own perfect cities.

As architectural historian Leland Roth writes,

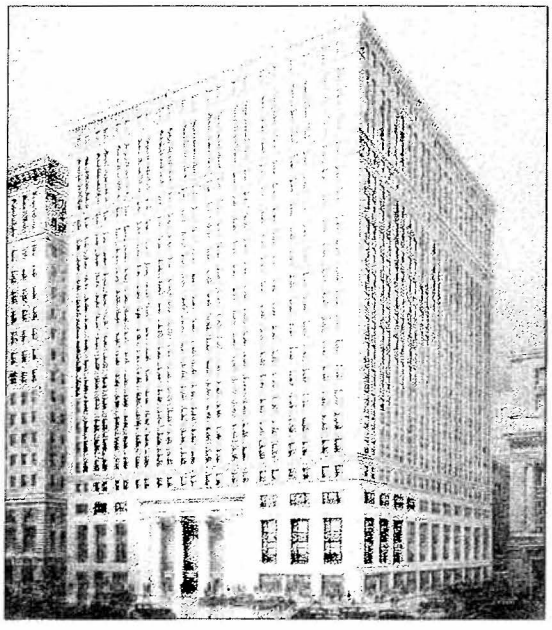
> It was such fairs that brought the City Beautiful movement to thousands of people who delighted in their bright order and the conveyed associations. As a result in scores of cities planning commissions were appointed and hundreds of new classical buildings were begun to house museums, libraries, art galleries, courthouses, and other public institutions.

It was also expressed in a multitude of venues ranging from bridges to streetscape amenities such as fountains and lamp posts. The style harked back to romanticized notions of early Greek and Roman civilizations and their important place as the foundation for Western civilization. At a time when the "American Century" was marching forward, and the United States was becoming a leading world nation, the

across the street at 175 N. State St., both designed by Rapp and Rapp in 1917 and 1920, respectively. Expanding the "cult of monumentality" are The Interocean Newspaper Building (1900, W. Carbys Zimmerman, demolished), Illinois Athletic Club at 112 S. Michigan Ave. (1908, Barnett, Haynes, and Barnett), and Stevens Hotel at 710 S. Michigan Ave. (1922-27, Holabird & Roche)

While Classical monumentality might be expected in public buildings, theaters or clubs, it was perhaps more unexpected for the casual turn-of-the-century observer when used for private office buildings. An early example, completed at the time of the World's Columbian Exposition, was the relatively small New York Life Building at LaSalle and Monroe (1893-98, Jenney and Mundie). But it was Burnham and his firm that made grandly-scaled Classical Revival-style office and bank buildings a standard of the age. These include the Railway Exchange Building (224 S. Michigan Avenue, 1904), Commercial National Bank (125 S. Clark Street, 1905), People's Gas (122 S. Michigan, 1910), Insurance Exchange Building (157-185 W. Jackson Boulevard, 1912), the Conway Building (26-40 N. Clark Street, 1913, and finally the Continental and Commercial National Bank (208 S. LaSalle Street, 1914). Burnham's successor firm, Graham, Anderson, Probst, and Anderson, then completed the State Bank Building (120 S. LaSalle Street, 1921), Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago (230 S LaSalle Street, 1921), Illinois Merchants Bank (231 S. LaSalle Street, 1924), and the Strauss Building (310 S. Michigan Avenue, 1924)

Other architects employing the style in private endeavors include Frost & Granger's Northern Trust Company (50 S. LaSalle Street, 1905), Marshall & Fox's Lake Shore Trust and Savings (605 N. Michigan Avenue, 1922), Alfred Alschuler's London Guarantee & Accident Building (360 N. Michigan Avenue, 1922-23), Giaver and Dinkleberg's Jeweler's Building (35 E. Wacker Drive, 1925), and Vitzhum & Burns's Old Republic Building (307 N. Michigan Avenue, 1925).



Images 29-32: (top left) La Salle Street has long been Chicago's premier financial street, terminated by the Chicago Board of Trade Building and lined with bank buildings designed in the Classical Revival-style. Two of these "temples of finance" include (bottom left) the State Bank Building and (bottom right) the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago. (top right) Burnham's & GAP & W also used the Classical Revival style for Chicago's Union Station.

LATER HISTORY

In the more than ninety years since its construction, the Continental and Commercial National Bank Building has been altered, as have most speculative office buildings of its vintage. Within two years of completion, the loggia was removed and the east entry redesigned. In the 1940s, structural challenges led to the removal of the building's visually dramatic cornice. On the interior, office spaces were reconfigured as tenants required.

As building technology and market demands changed, the visually impressive public spaces within the building were remodeled as the bank recast its image with modern design throughout in the years following World War II. The first floor lobby was remodeled with retail spaces. The monumental stairs were replaced by escalators. The grand second-floor banking hall was subdivided and remodeled for new tenants. At the same time, upper-floor corridor ceilings were lowered to hide new mechanicals, and the elevator lobbies modernized with wood paneling. In 1994 the banks needs changed and the company sold the building. Nonetheless, the building retains physical integrity sufficient to convey its historic values.

The building is listed as "orange" in the Chicago Historic Resource Survey. The property was also listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2007.

Image 33 & 34: (left) Historic banking hall which was removed in the 1950s (right) escalators installed to replace stairs leading to banking hall in the 1950s re-model.

CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION

According to the Chicago Municipal Code (Section 2-120-620 and -630), the Landmarks Commission has the authority to recommend a building or district for landmark status if it determines that it meets two or more of the stated "criteria for landmark designation," as well as possesses a significant amount of "integrity."

Based on the findings in this report, the following should be considered by the Commission in regards to a recommendation to designate the Continental and Commercial National Bank Building as a Chicago Landmark.

Criterion 1: Critical Part of City's Heritage
Its value as an example of the architectural, cultural, economic, historic, social, or other aspect of the heritage of the City of Chicago, State of Illinois, or the United States.

- The Continental and Commercial National Bank Building, through its scale, use of the Classical Revival architectural style, and quality of design, helped redefine the image of LaSalle Street, renowned as the financial center of both Chicago and the Midwest, as a "canyon" of tall, Classical Revival-style buildings.

- The Continental and Commercial National Bank Building epitomizes the Classical Revival architectural style as it was used for large-scale commercial and bank buildings, an important aspect of Chicago's architectural and economic history.

Criterion 4: Important Architecture
Its exemplification of an architectural type or style distinguished by innovation, rarity, uniqueness, or overall quality of design, detail, materials, or craftsmanship.

- The Continental and Commercial National Bank Building is a significant example of a Classical Revival-style commercial building.

- The building, through its use of stone and terra cotta, displays excellent Classical-style craftsmanship and ornamentation, a hallmark of designs from the office of D. H. Burnham and Company.

Criterion 5: Important Architect
Its identification as the work of an architect, designer, engineer, or builder whose individual work is significant in the history or development of the City of Chicago, State of Illinois, or the United States.

- The Continental and Commercial National Bank Building was designed by the significant Chicago architectural firm of D. H. Burnham and Company, and Daniel

Burnham, the firm's founder and principal architect, personally guided the building's design.

- D. H. Burnham is one of the most significant architects in Chicago history. With his partner, John Wellborn Root, he was a pioneer in the development of Chicago steel-frame commercial architecture.
- Burnham was the lead architect in the design and construction of the World's Columbian Exposition, one of the most significant events in Chicago history, and was instrumental in crafting the fair's image as the regally Classical "White City."
- Through his planning efforts after the fair, including the seminal Plan of Chicago, Burnham envisaged grandly-scaled Classical Revival-style buildings for both public and private uses.
- Burnham himself increasingly used the Classical Revival architectural style for commercial buildings such as the Continental and Commercial National Bank Building, leading and encouraging public taste for such Classically-inspired buildings.
- The Continental and Commercial National Bank is one of Burnham's last two designs and epitomizes his ideal commercial office building through its overall design, scale, and high level of detailing and craftsmanship.

Integrity Criteria

The integrity of the proposed landmark must be preserved in light of its location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, and ability to express its historic community, architectural or aesthetic interest or value.

The Continental and Commercial National Bank Building has experienced changes common to buildings of its vintage and use. On the exterior, the storefront zone has been modified on all four facades, a typical change. Downtown office buildings with ground floor retail are almost always modified over time as retail design trends and demand change. In the case of this building, within two years of completion, the loggia was removed and the east entry redesigned and brought to the east building line. As the retail spaces as designed did not open to the street, shop windows were extended to be retail entrances. In 1959-60, the entire building was modernized and new ground floor retail spaces were installed, each with a new exterior entry and in some instances new windows. In addition, in recent years, a small number of windows have been boarded over.

In the 1940s, structural challenges led to the removal of the dramatic cornice. Again, this removal was common for buildings of this age in the post-World War II era. Finally on the exterior, the windows on floors two and three were replaced circa 1959-60. Today, these windows are multi-pane glass in dark anodized aluminum frame.

On the interior, office spaces were reconfigured over time for new tenants. At the fourth floor and above, the corridor ceilings were dropped to hide new mechanicals and the elevator lobbies modernized with wood paneling.

As building technology and market demands changed, the building's public spaces were remodeled. In the 1959-60 modernization, the bank recast its image with modern design throughout. The first floor lobby was reconfigured with new retail spaces and "modern" finishes. The monumental stairs were removed and escalators installed.

At the same time, new floor slabs were inserted into the banking hall to create a third occupiable floor. The banking hall on the second floor was extensively remodeled for office space and the skylight was covered over.

Despite these changes, the Continental and Commercial National Bank Building possesses fine physical integrity through the continued strength of its aspects, particularly location, design, setting, materials, feeling, and association.

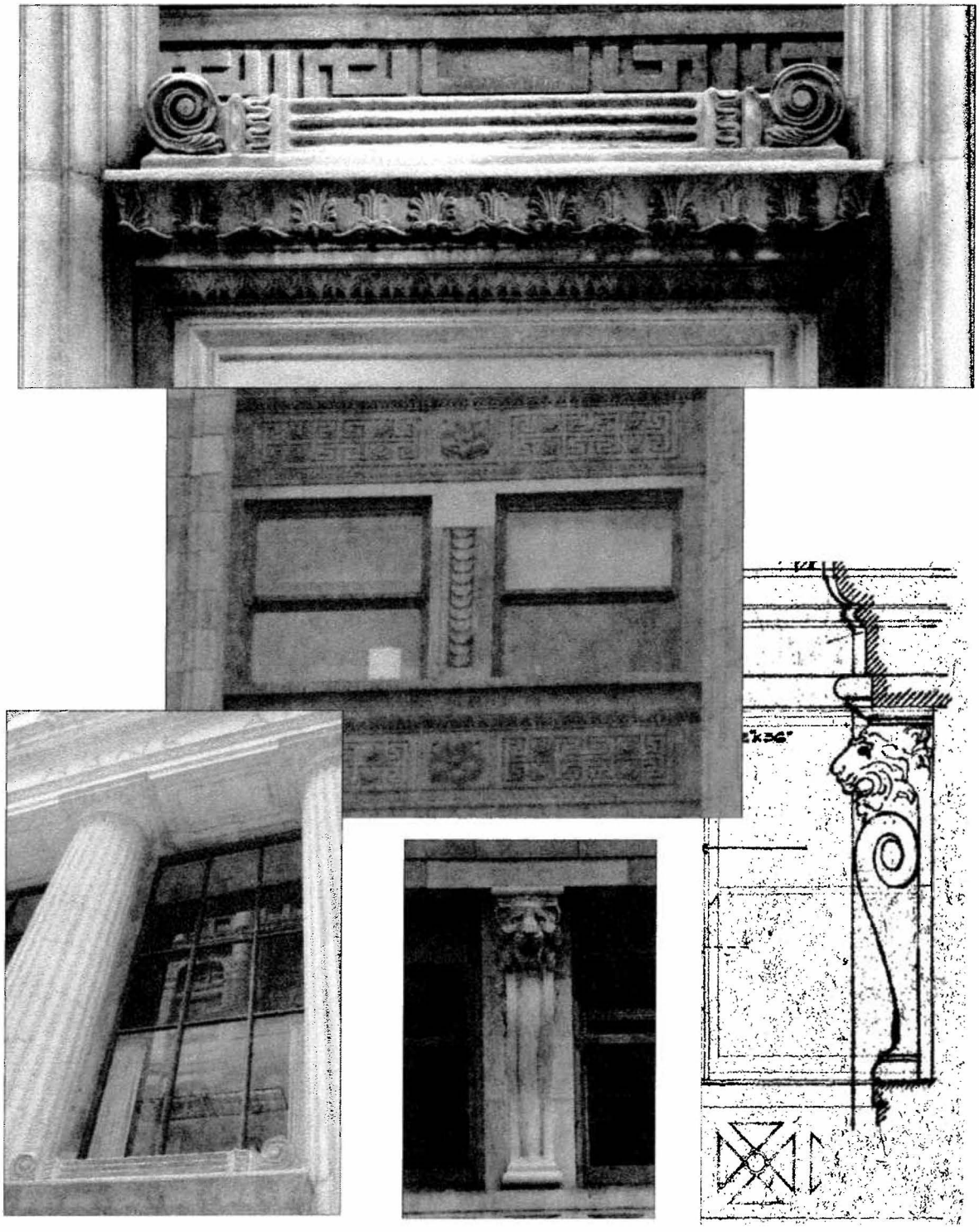


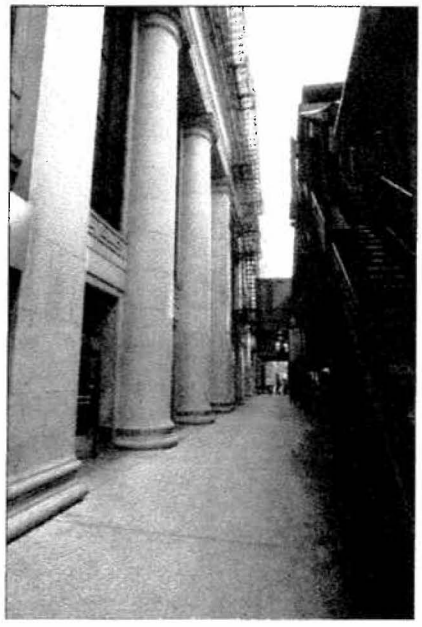
Image 35-39: Detail pictures of the Classical architectural features of the Continental & Commercial National Bank Building. (top) Scroll header of historical window (middle) Upper level window sashes with terra cotta detailing (bottom left) LaSalle Street window & column surrounds (bottom middle) Lion head spandrel (bottom right) 1913 drawing of lion head spandrel.

SIGNIFICANT HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES

Whenever a building or district is under consideration for landmark designation, the Commission on Chicago Landmarks is required to identify the significant features of the property. This is done to enable both the owners and the public to understand which elements are considered most important to preserve the historic and architectural character of the proposed landmark.

Based on its evaluation of the Continental and Commercial National Bank Building, the Commission staff recommends that the significant historical and architectural features for the preservation of this building be:

- All exterior elevations, including rooflines, of the building.



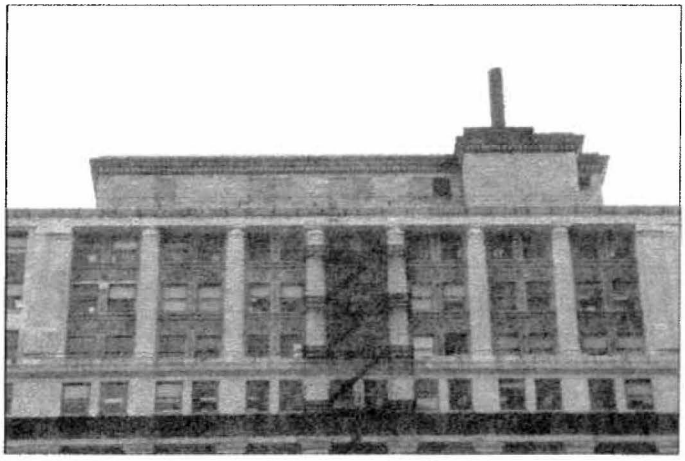


Image 40 & 41: Exterior pictures of the Continental & Commercial National Bank Building. (left) Wells Street façade featuring classical Doric columns ((right) Wells Street Façade upper portion of colonnade and roof line.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

CITY OF CHICAGO

Richard M. Daley, Mayor

Department of Planning and Development

Kathleen A. Nelson, First Deputy Commissioner

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Terry Tatum (project coordinator), editing.

Illustrations

Heritage Consulting Group Photographs 2006: 2, 3, 5, 12, 13, 24, 29, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 40, 41, 43

Graham, Anderson, Probst, and White Photo Archive http://www.gapw.com/ : 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 26, 27, 30

Burnham and Company's 1913 plans of Continental and Commercial National Bank: 7, 10, 14, 39

Chicago Historical Society, La Salle Street Collection: 1, 11, 16, 31, 32

Continental and Commercial National Bank Building, located on site: 15, 3

City of Chicago Planning and Development Office: 6, 42

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The Making of A Modern Bank: 8, 9

Daniel H. Burnham; Visionary Architect and Planner: 25

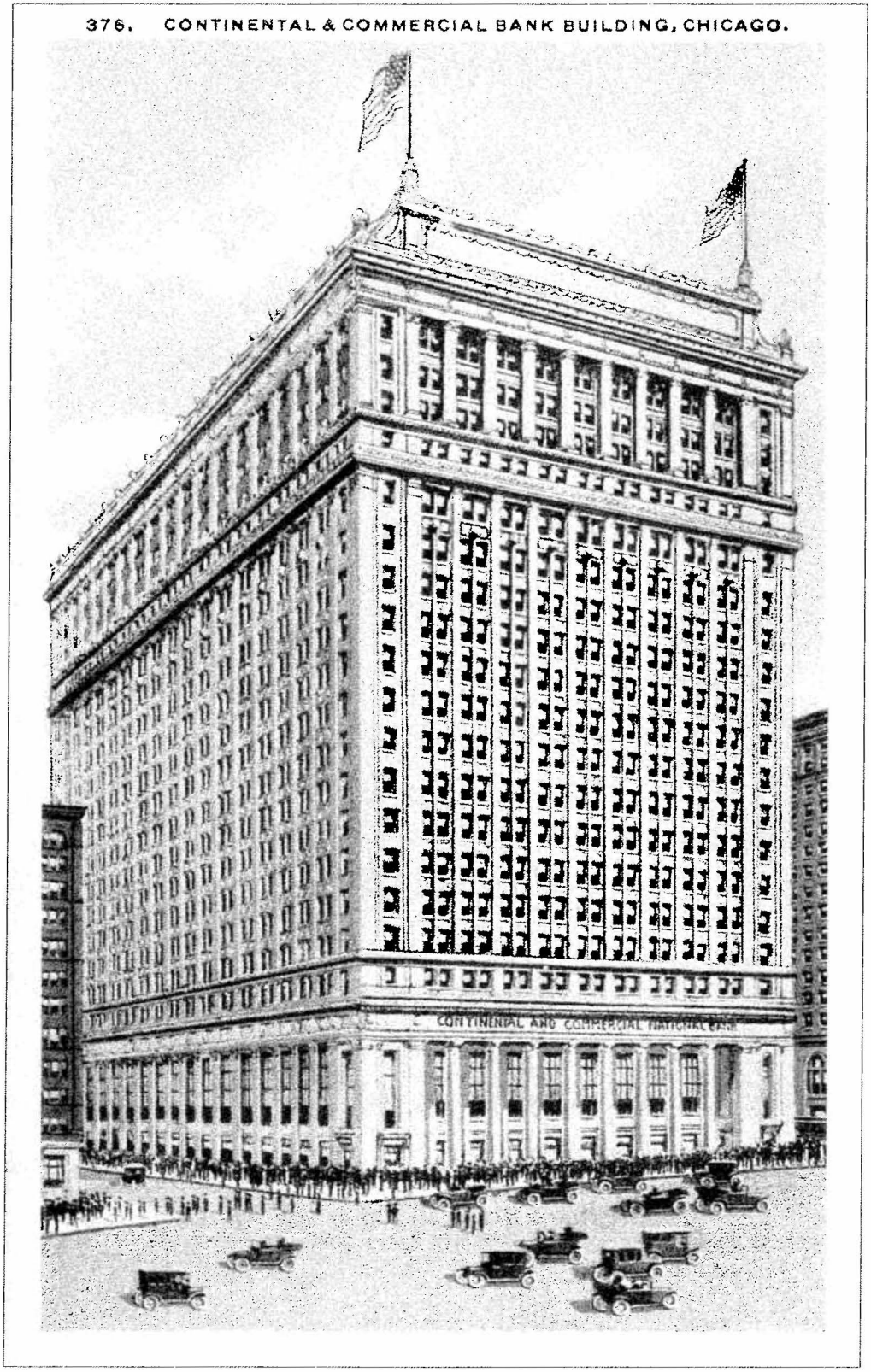

Image 42: Vintage post card of the Continental & Commercial National Bank Building

Image 43: Current photograph of the southwest corner the Continental & Commercial National Bank Building.

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Printed July 2007